

[Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters](#)

Pension Application of William Skinner R92

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 22 Nov 2013.

Pension Office Dec'r 16 1850

I certify that I have examined the claim of the administrator of William Skinner deceased under the act of July 5 1832, & I find that said Skinner was Captain of the Sloop Congress of the Virginia State Navy and served in that vessel until the Spring of 1780 say until the 1st of June of that year when the said vessel was laid up & he became supernumerary It is my opinion therefore that the claim should be allowed. Half pay is due at the rate of \$250 93 per annum per annum from the 1st of June 1780 to the 1st of January 1805 in which year it is proved that the said Skinner was lost at sea; and the amount is payable to Vespasian Ellis Attorney in fact for Joseph Segar administrator of Wm Skinner deceased

Jas E Heath – Commissioner of Pensions

[The following are in the [Revolutionary bounty-warrant records in the Library of Virginia](#):]

The petition of the heirs of Capt Wm. Skinner respectfully represent

That their Ancestor was for many years an officer – first as Lt. & then a Capt. in the Navy, in the Revolutionary War. The evidence of Jeremiah Cain shews that he was 3 years in service – which is confirmed by the concurrent testimony of Mrs Ann Payne – both witnesses of high respectability. An extract from the journal of Dr. George Hunter [VAS153], who was Surgeon of the Sloop Congress, which was duly authenticated in the application of Dr. Hunter's heirs for Land Bounty, shews that their ancestor was a Lieutenant as far back as Sep. 1776 while the navy Journal shew that in 1778 he was still in service & had been promoted to the rank of Captain.

Capt. Skinner has never rec'd. Land Bounty & your petitioners therefore ask the obtainance of the same. [Received 21 Jul 1832]

I certify that I was well acquainted with William Skinner of the Virginia Navy in the Revolutionary War both before & after the War. Said William Skinner was first a Lieutenant & was afterwards I think made a Capt & was to my knowledge five years in the State Navy as an Officer. He the said Skinner served on board of one of the Row Galleys the name of which I do not recollect. Ann herXmark Payne
[19 Jan 1832, Elizabeth City County VA]

Norfolk Borough to wit

This day Jeremiah Cain appeared before me a Justice of the Peace for the Borough aforesaid & made oath to the truth of these facts

That William Skinner, of Hampton who was first Lieutenant & then Captain served for three years in a vessel belonging to the Virginia Navy in the Revolutionary War in the capacities above stated & further this deponent saith not.

Sworn to before me this 39th day of May 1832.

Extract from the Journal of Dr. George Hunter – Surgeon on board the Sloop Congress –
“11th Sep. 1776 – “The Congress with several others set off for Norfolk whither I should have accompanied him – but for the number of sick – About 5 in the evening being invited on board Sanford's Brig with Lieutenant Skinner by Lt. Thomas [John Thomas, pension application R100] – the former & self proposed on our return to call at an elegant Brick house – that just offered to our view – imagining the best mode of introduction would be to enquire for fruit”

Sep. 24th 1776. “this morning Capt. Allison [John Allison of the Virginia Marine Corps], Lt. Skinner & self at Cranleys point [probably Craney Point at Portsmouth], where we saw Colonel Broadwater & John Hunter making salt.”

The above extracts from the Journal of Dr. George Hunter, which was duly authenticated in the application of Dr. H. for Land Bounty, shews that Lt. Skinner was in service in 1776 —

[The file includes several accounting entries dating from 2 Nov - 16 Dec 1776 under the heading “Lt. Wm. Skinner of the Sloop *Congress*, from “an old Book in this office, labelled Ledger of Navy accounts no 7,” certified 21 Jul 1832 by James E. Heath, Auditor of Public Accounts in Richmond VA. On the same date Heath certified extracts “from old day books in this office labelled Day Books to the Public Store at Williamsburg,” showing cash disbursements to Capt. Skinner of the Congress on 1 Mar 1777 and 17 Dec 1777. The online images are too poor for reliable transcription.]

Rich’d. 30 July 1832

Dr Sir/ Understanding the only difficulty in the claim of Capt Wm. Skinner arises from the fact of the “Congress” not being mentioned as a state Vessel in the acts of assembly which enumerated several other vessels and from the vagueness of the evidence of such service, I have looked into the case, as far as other engagements have permitted me to do, and beg leave to say – Doct. George Hunter who never was in any other Vessel but the “Congress” has rec’d. his land bounty – and after this very enquiry had been made. I have not seen those papers, but I take it for granted, there is evidence there filed, that she was of the Virginia Navy. She was certainly a vessel of war – but there was a Frigate Congress, of the U. States Navy, & this cause some doubt whether the sloop Congress belong to the State of Va. or the U.S. But the extracts of the Public Stores Houses of Virginia shew that she belong to the Va navy.

It was however of no importance in truth, whether she belonged to Va. or the U. S. as the Resolutions of Va. gave the same Bounty to a Virginian in the U. S. Navy as if in the State Navy. see References in Dr. Hunters case –

I herewith enclose an affidavit of Peter H. Triplett [pension application W2706] (obtained for another purpose) which states that Daniel Triplett was in the Virginia Navy in the sloop *Congress* in ‘76 and afterwards in ‘78, and in ‘79 while on the same vessel captured a prize, & came into Phila[delphia] where he saw him – meaning in the fall of ‘79.

This affidavit would seem to remove the only doubts as to the character of the Vessel & the State to which it belonged.

I enclose also a Certificate of Charles Broadwater, that Jno. Thomas belonged to that Vessel. the said Thomas has recd. the Bounty as an officer of the Virginia Navy.

The vessel was probably at sea & not in the ports of Virginia at the date of the passage of the act of oct session 1779 (the Journals show that the act passed on the last day of the session viz the 24 day of December), and not being in port was not spoken of by that act.

I enclose also a copy of a list of the officers of the Congress – it shows that Skinner was the Lieut in 76 and indicates the importance of the Vessel

I enclose the affidavit of Jeremiah Cain who says Capt Skinner left the service, at the time the vessels of the Va. navy were “mostly laid up” That is, in the spring or summer 1780 – pursuant to the act of the oct session viz 24 December ‘79.

Besides the evidence heretofore filed – here is evidence that Capt S. was in service, at least as late as the spring 1780

I hope it will be sufficient – If any other difficulty should arise – (which I cannot foresee) I would be glad of an opportunity for explanation.

I am [illegible word] Respectfully/ Yr. obt serv’t/ Thomas Green

Officers on board Congress

John Boucher	Comm'e. [Commodore]
William Skinner	1 st .Lieut.
John Thomas [R100]	2 nd Lieut.
George Hunter [VAS153]	Doct
Chas L Broadwater [Charles Lewis Broadwater S8096]	Midship'n. [Midshipman]
Daniel Triplett	Midship'n.
John Richards	Gunner
Robert Cary	Boats Swain [boatswain]
John Dunlevy	Clerk
Joseph Catherines	Stew't.[Steward]
Marines	
Capt. John Allison	
Robert Winsor Brown [Windsor Brown BLWt1816-300]	1 st .Lt.
James Moody	2 Lt.
Samuel Marbury	3 Lt.
John Buffen	Serg't. & Adjutant
John Philips	Serg't.
John Stone	Serg't.
James Bolton	Serg't.
John Adams	Corporal
John Huey	Corporal
Henry Rhodes	Carpenter
Vollantine Pears	Lieut.

Fairfax County to Wit:

October 29th 1831. this day Charles L. Broadwater & John Adams both of said County appeared before me and made oath in due form that the within list of Officers is a true list of the Officers on board the sloop of war called the Congress in the year 1776. Jno. C Hunter

I Peter Triplett of Culpeper Cty do declare that I was well acquainted with Daniel Triplett who was a midshipman in the Virginia Navy. In the year 1776 & '77 the s'd Triplett was on board the Sloop Congress and in '78 the s'd. Dan'l. Triplett belonged to Gibson's 1st Va St. Regt. and was appointed an officer in the staff dept. by Gen'l. Washington who gave him choice of appointments and he the s'd. Triplett chose the appointments of Commissary & Bullock Master and acted in the double capacity. In the fall of '78 The s'd Triplett left the Reg't. and joined the Sloop Congress again, he was then a Lieutenant and in 1779 captured a prize and carried it into the port of Philadelphia where I saw him. He was a brave and meretorious officer and thought highly of by Gen'l. Washington and could have got any appointment he would have solicited. The s'd Triplett was in service from the spring '76 until the fall 1779 with out intermission. Given under my hand and seal this the 16th January 1832

Peter H Triplett

[The following is from the file of John Dudley R35:]

State of Virginia/ Elizabeth City County towit,
The affidavit of James Burke [James Burke S6649] taken & made before me Richard G Banks a Justice of the peace in & for the County aforesaid this 23^d day of July 1850. The said affiant being duly sworn deposeth & saith that he knew well William Skinner of Hampton both during the Revolutionary War & after, that this affiant served himself as a warrant officer towit a Gunner on board the State Boat Patriot in said War; that the said William Skinner entered the naval service of Virginia early in the year seventeen hundred & seventy six as Lieut of the Sloop "Congress," was afterwards Captain of said Sloop

“Congress,” & served in that Capacity, until the Congress ceased to be a State vessel; when this happened the affiant cannot state precisely, but he thinks it was early in the year seventeen hundred & eighty; after the War, said Skinner was a Sea Captain, & was lost at sea about the year Eighteen hundred & five or six. Further this affiant saith not. Given under my hand the day & year first before written.

(signed) R. G. Banks J.P.